

Defining, Measuring, and Articulating the Impact of Effective Teacher Induction

Ellen Moir, *NTC Executive Director*

I have worked in education more than thirty years, and I believe this is the most exciting time I have witnessed. With federal stimulus monies aimed at scaling innovation across schools and districts, an amplified focus on the power of thinking entrepreneurially in education, and an increased national focus on the teaching profession, we are facing optimum conditions for making tremendous inroads in improving teacher effectiveness and, ultimately, student achievement. The New Teacher Center has established a track record in teacher and principal induction, and we pledge our continued commitment to influencing the education field to rise to the challenge of meeting the needs of beginning educators and helping them flourish as leaders.

Proof points of the effectiveness of our work already exist: Karen Cornetto,



Lisa Schmitt, and Laura Baker in “Getting Results for New Teachers in Austin by Reaching Out,” detail the impact of NTC mentors on increasing beginning teachers’ professional growth and instructional planning. Jenny Morgan explores a process of creating a culture that fosters teacher leadership and optimal learning conditions in “Effecting Systemic Change: Intensive Professional Development in Ravenswood School District.” Susan Hanson,

in “The Impact of Mentoring on the Professional Growth of Mentors,” shows that not only does high quality induction influence and improve beginning teaching, the mentor training and experience offers invigorating leadership development for veteran teachers as well.

Lisa Johnson, in her article, “Comprehensive or Add-on Induction? Impact on Teacher Practice and Student Engagement,” offers encouraging evidence that comprehensive mentor

Outreach Coordinator
Trinidad Castro and
Ellen Moir examine
induction program data

models positively contribute to student engagement and beginning teachers’ use of differentiated instruction. In his article, “Multiple Measures of Impact of Chicago’s Induction Program,” David Osta lays out a process for framing goals as a theory of action, complete with continuous improvement and feedback—a necessary step to ensure data-driven improvements to programs. Adele Hermann’s article, “New Teacher Center Induction Survey: Measuring Impact,” describes a data collection tool which is used by many partner school districts. These are examples of the impact NTC is making. Every day, in classrooms across America, NTC induction programs are building and sustaining human capital in schools.

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Comprehensive or Add-on Induction?

Impact on Teacher Practice and Student Engagement

By Lisa S. Johnson, Ed.D., *Senior Policy & Research Associate, Educator Quality, Learning Point Associates*

Does basic mentoring really serve as a solution to teacher development? Are more detailed definitions of induction and mentoring needed to address the needs of the new teacher? What is comprehensive induction and how does it differ from other induction programs? Does a more comprehensive model result in better outcomes for teachers and students? These questions perplex many within the world of education.

The rapid expansion of policies and resources devoted to new teacher induction are based on the assumption that induction programs have a positive influence on teacher quality and student learning. Yet there is insufficient data to assist educators and policy makers in determining the most effective or critical components of induction programs. One component is having highly trained, full released mentors whose work is fully focused on supporting beginning teachers. This study was developed to examine differences in student engagement and new teacher instructional practice in two types of induction programs: comprehensive induction programs, with full time mentors and add-on induction, with teachers who mentor in addition to having other duties such as curriculum coordinator or teacher.

Background

In 2005, NTC began collaborating with a large urban school district to improve beginning teachers' instructional effectiveness and the academic engagement of students through a series of mentor trainings, including one focused on differentiated instruction (DI). The DI training was particularly relevant as educators in the district serve culturally and linguistically diverse students living in a socio-economically depressed community. Both comprehensive and add-on mentors were offered this DI training.

Study Design

Four pairs of new teachers matched with respect to school, subject matter, and grade level were selected. In each pair, one was mentored by a full-time comprehensive mentor who supported a caseload of

Differences in Induction Conditions

	Comprehensive Induction	Add-on Induction
Professional Development	Mentors receive frequent professional development.	Mentors receive less frequent professional development.
Time Spent with New Teachers	Mentors meet weekly with new teachers; meetings include structured observations, reflection, and feedback focused on pedagogy.	Mentors meet inconsistently with new teachers.
Priority and Availability	New teachers and induction program are the priority of mentors; mentors work full-time mentoring new teachers; school, administration, and new teachers assume mentor is available to help.	Mentors work full-time as curriculum coordinators, school resource specialists, teachers, etc.
Offerings to New Teachers	Mentors offer weekly meetings, observations, and monthly new teacher seminars; mentors support communication between administrator and new teacher.	Meetings, observations, seminars, and communication with leadership are not required.

new teachers, and one was mentored by an add-on mentor. The three secondary schools involved had multiethnic, multilingual, and primarily low SES (60–67% free and reduced priced lunch) student populations.

The study examined the development of teacher practice related to differentiated instruction

through the use of self-report surveys. The surveys measured the use of differentiated instructional strategies by asking teachers about their use of pre-assessment, flexible grouping, goal setting, multiple assessments, resources, and teaching styles. Surveys were completed at the end of three class periods during one week, in both

fall and spring semesters. Student surveys, completed at the same time, examined student engagement through a composite score developed from items regarding student interest, concentration, and enjoyment. This measure of student engagement is a significant predictor of academic achievement, continuing motivation, and commitment to educational opportunities.

Research Findings and Conclusions

Teachers who were inducted by the comprehensive mentors were more likely to use DI strategies than were the four teachers who had add-on mentors. In addition, new teachers with comprehensive mentors showed statistically significant increases in their levels of in-class student engagement, moving from 6.8 to 7.1 on a ten-point scale, while their counterparts

with add-on mentors experienced a decrease in student engagement, moving from 6.9 to 6.3. These statistically significant differences suggest that teachers in the comprehensive induction model defied the general trend of decreased academic engagement over time, while their add-on mentored counterparts did not. In addition, these findings suggest that teachers who used strategies for

differentiated instruction had greater gains in student engagement. These findings contribute to the body of literature that informs educators and policy makers on the impact of induction support on teacher quality.

To obtain the full January 2009 NTC Research Brief, Comprehensive Induction or Add-on Induction, go to: http://www.newteachercenter.org/pdfs/ResearchBrief_0901.pdf.

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I want to enlist your support in this endeavor to influence a national dialogue on the

importance of high quality induction for beginning teachers and school leaders. We cannot stand alone in making the commitment to demonstrating the work's value and impact. All of us must document and clearly articulate the impact we are making in schools and classrooms. We must sharpen our focus, define a set of ambitious goals, and plot methods of vigorously measuring and validating progress. We need to learn to tell our story with precision. This is why NTC's primary focus over the next year will be defining and measuring impact.

First, we are defining what we mean by success. We will continue to monitor outcomes such as indicators of student engagement, ongoing interaction with mentors and district leaders, and our ability to influence state and school partners in designing induction programs. We also want to ensure that our work contributes either directly or indirectly to increased student learning.

Defining our impact will be challenging, and measuring it will likely be an even greater test. Many human capital organizations, school districts, and researchers are wrestling with the process of linking input and actions to evidence of student growth and learning. I not only aspire to join the conversation, but I want NTC to be a leader in creating a means to measure teacher and leader

effectiveness that is both rigorous and honest, and also reflective of our expertise with formative assessment, school working conditions, and the quality of school leadership.

How will we do this? First, I am challenging everyone at NTC to think through the process of defining and measuring our impact. What is going well? Where can we drive greater impact? Adopting a mindset of continuous improvement will help us not only notice areas for increased attention, but also leverage the good work that is already delivered in classrooms across the country. Knowing the expertise that resides among our staff makes me confident that we can make significant progress.

Second, we will hire a director to guide this work. While a specific individual

and team will be appointed to oversee our impact work, all colleagues, mentors, and school district partners will share their stories about how NTC programs have made a difference in teaching and learning.

Finally, I look to key partners for support. Defining and measuring the next generation of NTC's impact is inherent to our success, and I invite all interested supporters in this worthy endeavor to join us at this crucial time.

The next few months will be a critical in outlining the NTC's impact and the tools we need to meet the current challenges in education. Teachers, principals, mentors, and students across the country are engaged with us, and I could not be more energized by this call to action. ■

Getting Results for New Teachers in Austin by REACHing Out

By Karen Cornetto, Ph.D.,
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Laura Baker, Senior Associate for
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AISD REACH, a 4-year pilot teacher incentive pay program at Austin Independent School District (AISD), supports and rewards outstanding teaching by providing professional development opportunities and instructional support to teachers, as well as stipends to those able to demonstrate excellence. (For a complete program description, please visit <http://www.austinisid.org/inside/initiatives/compensation/index.phtml>.)

A critical component of the AISD REACH program is intensive novice teacher mentoring. Unlike mentors provided to other schools in AISD, REACH mentors do not have teaching responsibilities. Rather, they are dedicated, full-time mentors supporting up to ten novice teachers each. REACH mentors received intensive training from New Teacher Center (NTC) four times during the 2008–2009 school year and engaged in ongoing PLC work during

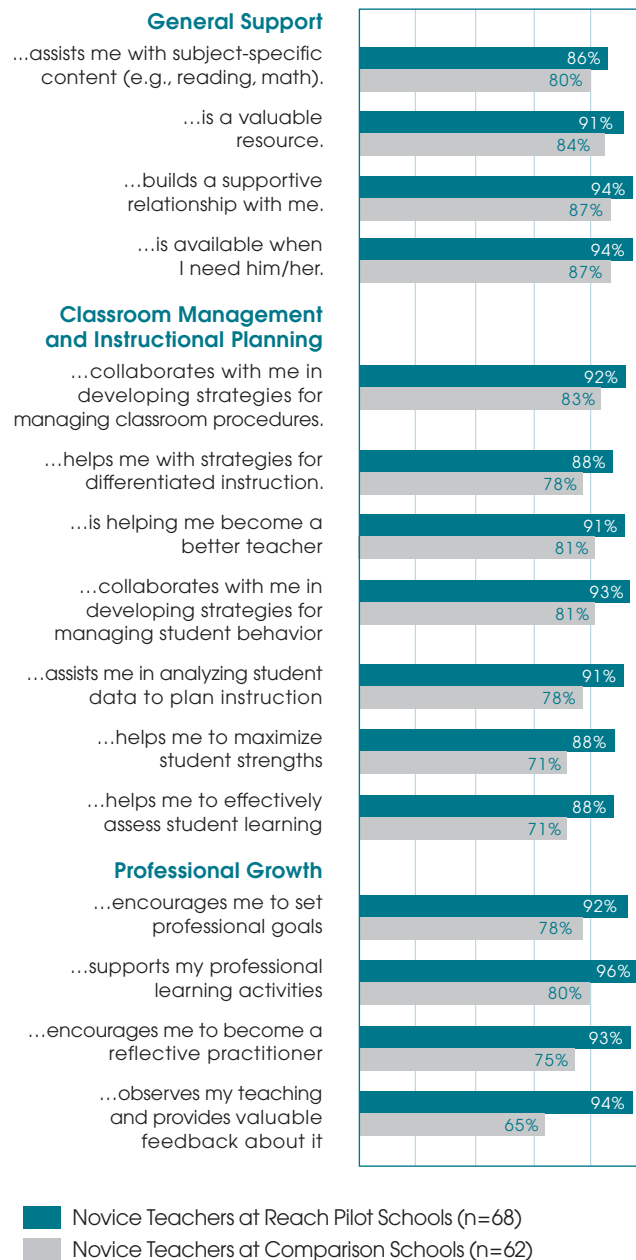
the year, with content relevant to mentee teachers' needs at that time of year. AISD's Department of Program Evaluation collected data at multiple points during the school year to assess the mentoring program impact. Mentors, teachers, and principals completed surveys and participated in focus groups, and mentors maintained a daily log of their activities.

Program Impact in Year One

Following the completion of year two, focus groups revealed widespread appreciation for the commitment, support, and expertise of REACH mentors. Educators praised the mentors for their work not only with novice teachers, but also teachers campus-wide. The influence of mentors extended to veteran teachers, some of whom expressed intense regret that the program was not available when they began teaching. Many teachers, principals, and instructional coaches felt the mentors were so valuable the program should be implemented district wide. One instructional coach discussed how REACH mentors had partnered with her so that she could focus on the content support while the

Figure 1. Teachers Who Agreed or Strongly Agreed With Mentor-Related Statements

My mentor...



Source: Spring Austin Independent School District 2009 Employee Coordinated Survey
Note: All differences are significant at $p < .01$.

mentors focused on classroom support. One principal stated, “Mentoring is the best thing to come out of AISD REACH, not the money.”

Novice teachers reported their mentors had substantially influenced their ability to be successful and, in some cases, influenced their decision to stay at the same school for the coming school year. They also discussed the many ways their mentors had provided instructional strategies, encouraged their collaboration and integration with more experienced peers, and offered

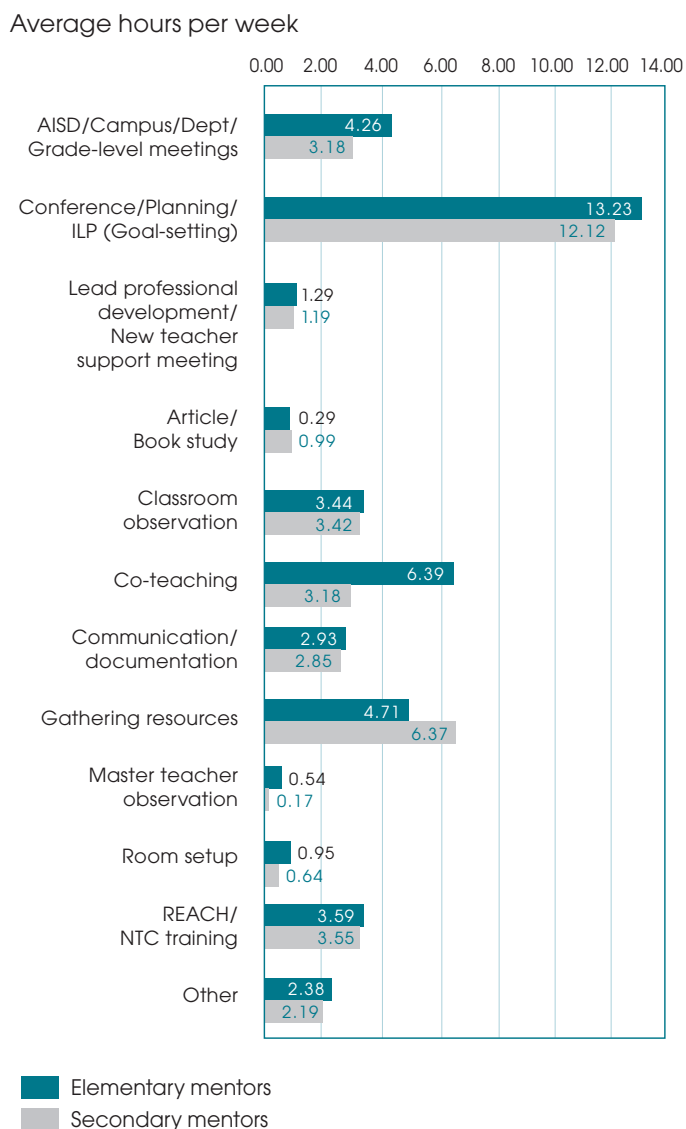
In several cases, teachers disclosed that they wouldn’t have made it through the year without the support of their mentors.

emotional support. In several cases, teachers disclosed that they wouldn’t have made it through the year without the support of their mentors. One mentor even received a letter from a teacher’s parents, thanking her for helping their daughter through her first year of teaching. That teacher had planned to resign midyear, but with assurances of support from her mentor, she not only finished her first year, but returned for a second.

In addition to the focus groups, survey results indicated that teachers with REACH mentors reported significantly more favorable levels of mentor involvement than did their peers at comparison schools (i.e., non-pilot schools that are demographically and academically similar to AISD REACH pilot schools) with “spare-time” mentors (Figure 1). Responses were most discrepant between the two groups for ratings of mentor assistance with professional growth (e.g., observing teaching and providing valuable feedback about it) and instructional planning (e.g., helping to effectively assess student learning). Clearly, the full-time, highly trained mentors were able to collaborate with a greater and more meaningful professional development and support for their novice teachers than were traditional spare-time mentors.

To understand what, in particular, the REACH mentors were doing so well, they documented the activities they engaged in with their mentees: the type of activity (i.e., a choice of 16 activities plus “other”); length of time spent; activity participants; and any comments they wished to provide (e.g., information about the content of their meeting). Mentors spent the most time (on average 18 hours per week) in conferences for planning and

Figure 2. Summary of 2008–2009 Mentor Weekly Activities, by Level



Source: Austin Independent School District REACH Mentor Database

goal setting with mentees, and gathering resources for teachers (Figure 2). They reported spending an additional 6 to 10 hours per week conducting

classroom observations and co-teaching with mentees. Little difference was found between elementary and secondary mentors in the amount of time spent on

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these activities. However, elementary mentors reported spending more time co-teaching with mentees and secondary mentors reported spending more time gathering resources. Ultimately, this information will be used to determine which activities had the greatest impact on teacher success as measured by student performance.

Conclusion

The AISD REACH mentoring program received praise from both novice and veteran teachers, and principals and instructional coaches who described a variety of ways REACH mentors facilitated professional growth and teacher retention on their campuses. The ratings regarding mentoring experiences of REACH novice teachers were significantly more positive than those of their comparison school peers with “spare-time” mentors, particularly in the areas of professional growth and instructional planning. This likely reflects the significant time mentors spent each week helping novice teachers plan lessons, set goals, gather resources, and co-teach. Future analyses will continue to explore the relationships between mentor activities and student performance of mentee teachers. ■

Chicago's Induction Program

Assessing Impact Using Multiple Measures

By David Osta, *Director of Policy and Communications, Chicago New Teacher Center*

Since 2006, the Chicago New Teacher Center (CNTC) has provided a high quality induction program, featuring well trained, fully released mentors (we call them “coaches”) to hundreds of beginning teachers in Chicago Public Schools. In summer 2009, CNTC was selected as the primary induction provider by Chicago Public Schools, almost tripling the number of teachers supported to nearly 1,000 citywide. As we grow, it is important to understand

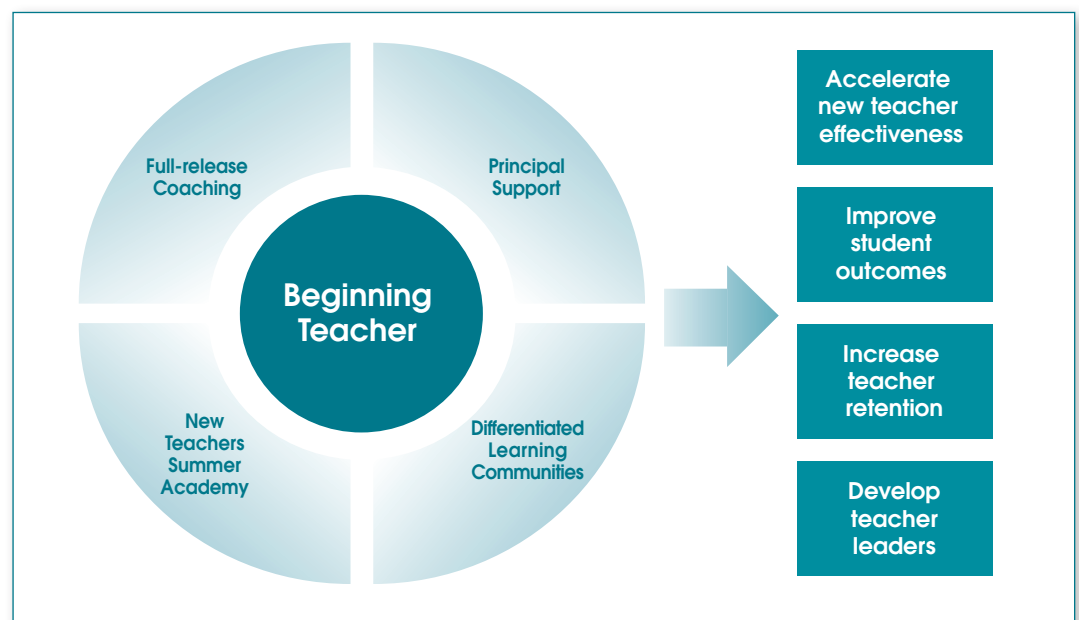
and articulate the impact our induction program is having on new teachers.

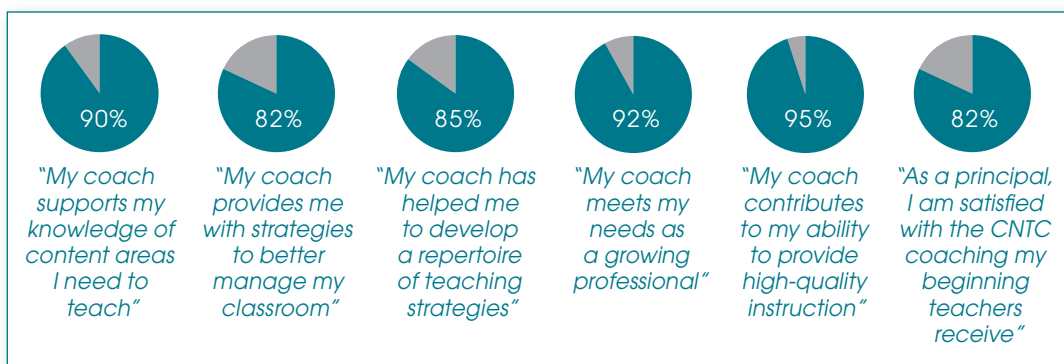
Chicago New Teacher Center's understanding of our impact begins with an important first step—defining and aligning program activities with our desired outcomes (see Theory of Action diagram). Because the quality of our program activities drives progress towards the outcomes, CNTC is continually refining the systems that help assess the implementation of program activities over time. This fall, CNTC launched a set of expectations to help guide our coaches' work. Additionally, CNTC is now in the second year of

implementing an online database where coaches log their coaching interactions. These tools help coaches, lead coaches and program leaders formatively assess the progress of beginning teachers, individual coaches, teams of coaches and the entire organization.

As described in the Theory of Action, the target outcomes are: accelerating new teacher effectiveness, increasing retention, improving student outcomes, and developing teacher leaders.

Each outcome presents its own measurement challenges—most related to the limits of current education research. As a result, we rely on indicators to tell us





if we are on the right path. These indicators help provide timely information to assess and inform our program activities. CNTC has begun collecting and analyzing data to measure progress toward three of the target outcomes. We are also in the final stages of partnering with an independent research organization to provide additional support to monitor the implementation of the program as we expand across the city this year and to build the link between coaching activities and improvements in teacher practice.

New teacher effectiveness—

CNTC coaches collect data about new teacher practice using Formative Assessment System (FAS) tools and log select details of their interactions with beginning teachers in our online database. This documentation allows the coaches to assess the development of their beginning teacher, reflect

on the support they are providing and continually customize the support they provide to beginning teachers. Each year CNTC also surveys beginning teachers, asking them to assess the impact their coach and the induction program have had on their teaching practice. (See graphs above for some results of the most recent survey.) In the future, CNTC plans to integrate a teacher's performance on a district evaluation protocol (based on Charlotte Danielson's Framework) into its measurement of new teacher effectiveness.

Retention—Using our online database, we track the retention and mobility of each beginning teacher who we mentored. To date, teacher retention data has not been available from the district, but because teacher retention is a key outcome for our program, we have invested in building our capacity to measure it. We now have accurate records

for the beginning teachers from 2007–08 to present. 2008–09 retention data will be available later this fall.

While important, we know that retention alone is not a sufficient outcome. CNTC wants to know the quality of those teachers who are retained and not retained. Work has already begun both internally and with the district to integrate our measures of teacher retention and teacher effectiveness, and ultimately, student achievement. Finally, it is important to know why teachers leave their schools, as the reasons for leaving may have important implications for district policies. CNTC has begun developing an exit survey for teachers who do not return to their school or the district.

Student achievement—

While impact on student learning is the ultimate target of the induction program, it is also the most difficult to assess. Independent researchers are currently

conducting an exploratory analysis to measure the impact of the CNTC induction model on student achievement. While they face methodological challenges, it represents the most thoughtful attempt thus far to examine the impact on student achievement. Preliminary indications are that the results of the study will be available late 2009 or early 2010.

Chicago Public Schools is continuing to refine its data systems to produce high quality and reliable value-added student achievement data. In 2008–09, value-added scores were publicly available at the school and grade level for select district administrators. We continue to track the progress of this possible data source to link our work to student achievement as data becomes available.

Moving forward—

CNTC is committed to capturing accurate data to document progress toward our Theory of Action outcomes to refine our program and provide evidence of our efforts to strengthen it to better serve Chicago Public Schools' new teachers and their students. ■

The Impact of Mentoring on the Professional Growth of Mentors

By Susan Hanson, Ph.D.,
New Teacher Center Researcher

High quality induction programs are designed to not only benefit novice teachers but also support the professional development of experienced teachers who serve as mentors. To investigate the influence of induction on mentors, we began a longitudinal investigation of mentors participating in NTC's induction program in Durham and Boston Public Schools. Our study follows thirty mentors, most of whom we continue to interview each year. Here is a summary of how mentors characterize their professional growth in their first three years as mentors.

Year 1: A New Role

Mentors unanimously report that their new role as full time mentors required them to quickly develop new skills and perspectives that many had not anticipated. Entering new schools, establishing trusting relationships, and providing instructional coaching to a variety of beginning teachers is complex work.

"I really can say that my learning curve has just been in upward mode the whole year. There isn't a day I haven't learned something about myself, about my beginning teachers, about my school, and about the BPS system. It's really multi-layered, the learning that I've done. It's phenomenal."



Most profound for many mentors was the opportunity to observe many other teachers' classrooms in different schools. They compared their own experiences as novice teachers to teachers they now mentored. Sometimes the differences in working conditions and administrators were significant. As outsiders building new relationships, first year mentors were impressed with their acquired ability to see issues from both the teachers' and administrators' perspective. This shift from the

perspective of a classroom teacher to that of an educator was a major theme.

The first year of mentoring was challenging for mentors, particularly those who worked in several schools. Mentors compared how they felt adjusting to a new job and culture, to the feelings of a first-year teacher. Some adjusted to and embraced their new role working with adults and not being part of the teaching staff more easily than others.

The sustained training and support the mentors received from Mentor Academies and Forums were tremendously valuable in building their knowledge growth and transition, some calling it, "the best professional development I have ever had." In both Durham and Boston, mentors emphasized

Durham mentors Angela Green and Kristin Walker share ideas from their action research.

"I will never be the same teacher again. I really feel that very profoundly."

that they worked with an amazing group of competent educators who offered them valuable insights from their years of experience, an "enthusiasm for learning that is contagious," and "a high degree of professionalism."

Year 2: Greater Clarity

Mentors have a better understanding of their job the second year, knowing what to anticipate and being more prepared. With a better understanding of what excellent coaching entails, some exclaimed, "I didn't know how much I didn't know the first year!"

We've had more training on issues of equity and the needs of English language learners; I'm learning more about what's going on. So I'm finding it's more complex. It's harder, but I don't mean that in a negative way.

Year 2 mentors said that their increased confidence and skills made them better able to focus on instructional issues, rather than on the mentee's emotional needs. They felt their coaching and reflective skills had improved, but their increased knowledge made some more aware of what they needed to work on.

Mentors returning to the same school(s) the second year said that they felt more comfortable being known and with some felt more confident speaking as colleagues with administrators. Mentors assigned to new schools reported a range of responses that included feeling more skilled at relationship building, to feeling like they had to start anew. In Durham, mentors coach the same teachers for three consecutive years, thereby gaining experience coaching more experienced teachers.

Year 3: Self-Efficacy and Leadership

Year 3 mentors communicate confidence in their skills as mentors and as teacher leaders. Seeing firsthand the increasing number of teachers who one has coached, makes it apparent to mentors that by influencing teaching in many classrooms, they can have an impact on many students. It's a powerful image.

By the third year, most mentors embrace their role as teacher leaders who have coaching skills to improve a teacher's teaching and leadership skills to advocate for good working conditions for all new teachers. Moving teaching practice forward remains at the heart of mentor work, and many feel greater self-efficacy in guiding their mentees:

You get a lot more brash and you get a lot more, "Look, this needs to happen here and I'm not afraid to tell you (about) it," whereas I

"It's feeling more and more like it's the right place for me to be. It's feeling better. It was feeling good last year, but it's really feeling good this year."

probably would have been a lot more afraid my first year.

Mentors extend their influence in schools through forging strong relationships with site administrators, program leaders, and colleagues. Mentors shared opportunities to coach administrators, advocate on behalf of teachers, and work collaboratively with literacy and mathematics specialists. Mentors have been asked to facilitate department and grade level teacher learning communities and district professional development sessions.

By the end of the third year, most mentors are comfortable in their role as teacher leader, coach, and advocate. Usually faced

with a fixed mentor term or budget cuts, they must consider their career path. Yet regardless of whether they return to teaching or assume another leadership position, mentors hold a strong vision of how they can contribute to improving schools. The mentoring experiences of these educators are part of a career of continuous professional growth, with powerful implications beyond mentoring for themselves and the schools in which they work. ■

Members of Boston Public Schools' New Teacher Development Program at an end-of-year Forum

"When I first started as a mentor... I was pretty isolated. I was just doing my own thing and I was not a collaborator. I feel 100% different about that now. I am a total collaborator. I don't think you can do the best job without collaborating with other people. What taught me that was the mentor forums and the mentor academies and having the opportunity to interact with other mentors. I get the opportunity to work with some really brilliant teachers and I love it."



The New Teacher Center Induction Survey

Measuring Impact

By Adele Hermann, Ph.D.,
New Teacher Center Researcher

Evaluation is a critical piece of any induction program, ultimately determining quality and directing improvement. According to the authors of *The Feasibility Standards*, an evaluation should be “realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal” (Joint Committee, 1994, p.63). Odell & Huling (2000) in their discussion of the Mentoring Framework, suggest that any evaluation must take into account a variety of program purposes and collect data from multiple stakeholders.

If one agrees with Heidkamp & Shapiro (1999, p.45) that “the most direct way of knowing whether you are giving new teachers what they need is to ask them,” then the evaluator must figure out exactly who and what to ask, how to ask it, and then how to report the answers.

The New Teacher Center’s Induction Survey has all of the elements of a strong evaluation instrument. Developed over several years, it was administered in 2009 by 21 programs, representing nearly 700 districts in 15 states, to more than 8,000 beginning teachers, mentors

and site administrators. In addition to assisting in directing professional development for beginning teachers and mentors, the Induction Survey is used to guide programmatic changes and play a role in program reports. It is also a method for mentors to receive honest, anonymous feedback from their beginning teachers.

Measuring Impact

This type of evaluation must be able to measure the impact of the induction program in key areas. The New Teacher Center’s Induction Survey focuses on retention, teaching practice and student learning. The following sections address these topics, allowing for the consideration of actual survey results by providing the findings from a sample program. Charts illustrate how to display results. The sample program consists of 800 beginning teachers who participate in a comprehensive mentoring program. The results are from a 2009 Induction Survey.

Impact on Retention

To support programs in considering teacher retention, a number of survey items question beginning teachers about their immediate career plans and the extent to which their mentor has impacted their decisions. When looking at the sample program, 79% of respondents plan to stay in their classroom in the coming year, 11% are

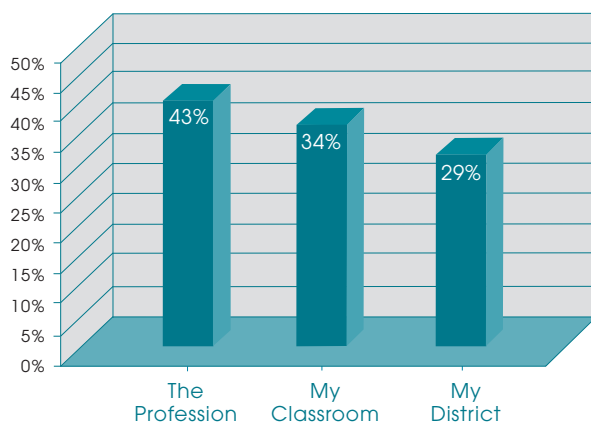
planning to move to another school outside the district, while the remaining 10% have other plans including moving to another grade level or content area, moving to a non-teaching position, or going on maternity/paternity leave. Only 2% of the beginning teachers in this program plan on leaving the profession. A related question asks about the impact of their mentor on their decision to stay in the profession, their classroom and district. The sample program findings indicate that 43% of beginning teachers report that their mentor impacted their decision to stay in the profession, 34% report an impact on their decision to stay in their classroom, and 29% in the district (Chart 1). A positive link between the work of the mentor and beginning teacher retention is clear evidence of mentor impact.

Impact on Teaching Practice

Second, the Induction Survey measures the impact of both the mentor and the induction program on teaching practice. Teachers are questioned about work with their mentor in engaging and supporting students, creating effective learning environments, planning and designing lessons, assessment, and professional development. A number of items directly address the mentor’s impact

Chart 1: Impact on Teacher Retention

My mentor has impacted my decision to stay in...
(Mark all that apply)



Sample Program (n=800 Beginning Teachers)

on their beginning teacher's practice. Participating teachers are asked to indicate the degree of their success they attribute to their mentor. In the sample program, 12% of beginning teachers attribute a great deal, 26% quite a bit, and 46% some of their success to work with their mentor—84% attribute some of their success to work with their mentor (Chart 2). Additional items addressing how program elements impact teacher practice consider the role of the mentor in assisting the beginning teacher to be an effective teacher and ways the mentor and program meet their needs as a growing professional (Chart 3).

Impact on Student Learning

Third, some items allow the program to find out impact on student learning, specifically the role of the mentor and program professional development. Beginning teachers are asked the extent to which working with their mentor helped them impact their students' learning. In the sample program, 86% agree that their mentor helped them impact student learning. Similarly, when participating teachers were asked if the professional development the program provided enhanced their skills and abilities to apply learnings in their classroom, 75% agreed. (Chart 3).

Conclusion

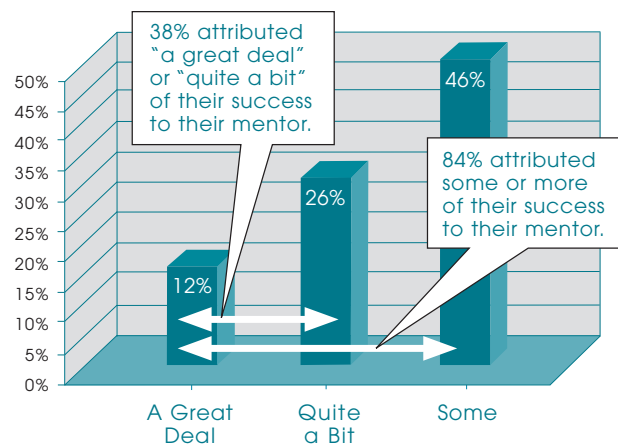
In a time of budgetary constraints, accountability is mandatory on many levels. In addition to helping direct professional development for both beginning teachers and mentors, the New Teacher Center's Induction Survey provides data on program impact to stakeholders from local school districts, school boards and foundations. Cross-program comparisons of Induction Survey data can also be used to influence researchers and policymakers at local, state and national levels. ■

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Chart 2: Impact on Teaching Practice

Of the success you've had as a beginning teacher, what proportion would you attribute to help from your mentor? (Mark all that apply)



Sample Program (n=800 Beginning Teachers)

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). *The program evaluation standards: How to assess evaluations of educational programs, 2nd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

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Chart 3

Impact on Student Learning

	Agree
Overall, work with my mentor has helped me to impact my students' learning	86%
The program's professional development has enhanced my skills and abilities to apply learnings in my classroom	75%

Impact on Teaching Practice

	Agree
Overall, my mentor has helped me to be an effective teacher	87%
Overall, my mentor meets my needs as a growing professional	87%
Overall, the mentoring program meets my needs as a growing professional	76%

Sample Program (n=800 Beginning Teachers)

Effecting Systemic Change

Intensive Mentoring and Professional Development in Ravenswood School District

By Jenny Morgan, *CA Regional Director* and Kitty Dixon, *Director, School Innovation, New Teacher Center*

New Teacher Center began working with Ravenswood City School District in East Palo Alto in 2003. Funded through a generous grant from the Hewlett Foundation, the entry point for addressing system-wide improvement efforts was focused work with new teachers and administrators. NTC employs an intensive mentoring model and systems approach that has positively impacted teaching and learning and the professional culture.

A Small District with Large Challenges

Although a relatively small district (4,500 students attend grades K–8 in 7 schools), RCSD faces complex issues that rival those of large urban districts, including a controversial, court-mandated special education services model. The community is predominantly working-poor. Of its student population, 90% are eligible for free and reduced lunch and 66% are English language learners.

In 2003, the professional context in RCSD was not optimal. Teacher turnover was at 75%. The most common reasons teachers cited for leaving were lack of support from administration, lack of/insufficient materials, inadequate facilities, and low salary/benefits. Top leadership was in transition, the central

office understaffed, many principals were new, and there were significant gaps in systems to address routine procedures. The pervasive culture of blame and frustration was reflected in low student achievement.

Theory of Action

The NTC theory of action is: Building leadership and human capital at all organizational levels will promote a professional context where teachers and principals work collaboratively to ensure student success.

RCSD, Hewlett Foundation, and NTC identified three key target areas:

- Advancing practice, development, and leadership
- Accelerating student achievement
- Improving retention

Strategies and Impact: Practice and Leadership Development

A new teachers' learning curve is steep, and the notion that a teacher can accelerate student learning simply by using the adopted text is misguided and dangerous. Teachers must know and use the texts strategically in the context of content standards and effective pedagogy. To support teacher knowledge and practice, NTC uses a unique, intensive mentoring model (see sidebar).

Ongoing, job embedded professional development driven by teacher and student need is central to NTC's Formative Assessment System (FAS). Teachers self-assess, set professional goals, plan standards-based

Components of the Intensive Mentoring Model Used in RCSD

- A rigorous mentor selection process based, among other criteria, on the candidate's interpersonal skills, literacy and content knowledge, and leadership initiative
- A mentor/teacher ratio of 1:10
- Weekly contact with teachers that strategically incorporates the teaching points from previously attended professional development.
- Use of NTC's Formative Assessment System to guide teachers through the plan, teach, and reflect process
- Development of mentors' expertise through ongoing professional development in coaching, literacy, math and pedagogy
- Development of teachers' expertise through ongoing professional development in literacy and content areas
- A Lead Mentor at each site whose duties include communicating regularly with the site administrator and administrative coach, attending staff and leadership team meetings, attending and often facilitating site-based professional development, working with new and veteran staff at grade level meetings

lessons, analyze student work, and debrief classroom observations. The impact of a skilled mentor using NTC FAS strategically is that our newest practitioners learn the habits of mind needed to continuously assess and adjust instruction, ultimately independent of their mentors.

Fostering teacher leadership opportunities is another key strategy that strongly impacts professional culture. When RCSD implemented teacher-facilitated learning teams, NTC began a monthly Facilitator Forum, designed for teacher-facilitators to

As the expertise and experience of the facilitators and their teams have grown, so has the depth of their inquiry cycles...

develop their facilitation skills and knowledge of professional learning teams. As the expertise and experience of the facilitators and their teams have grown, so has the depth of their inquiry cycles, as well as their sense of professionalism and ownership for students' achievement:

The nicest part is there's a real sense of professionalism among us. There is some

Assessment Wall of Student Data drives collaborative discussion

autonomy, which is such a good thing to have—it is empowering. You start to think: I know what my students need. You think more about their needs than what those on top think. I think we learned that as a group, to focus on the students. We learned how to have a professional interaction defined by us (Formative Evaluation Report, 2008).

Coaching, focused professional development, and collaborative learning opportunities have also impacted the skill, knowledge, and instructional vision of the administrative team. Initially, individual coaching helped principals problem solve such issues as hiring, scheduling, and teacher supervision. Within their own learning communities, principals networked and implemented *Quick Visits*. Over time, the focus was less on operational systems and more on leading data based school improvement efforts. The impact of administrators' experiencing the power and possibility of data based, collaborative work in a



professional context is that they, in turn, want that for their teachers.

Strategies and Impact: Student Achievement

To impact student achievement, NTC mentors and coaches help individual teachers, grade levels, and sites know their content, pedagogy and students so well that the next step for accelerating student achievement is clear. For example, NTC mentors help site leadership teams use assessment walls, where each student has a card with multiple assessment data. By itself, the wall does little to impact teacher practice and student achievement. The power and impact of assessment walls lies in the conversations and questions that surface among teams: *What can the student do that I can build on? What*

have others done to teach this effectively? What am I not seeing in the data? What additional information do I need? What are my next instructional steps?

As a mentor team, we are constantly sharing and analyzing our mentoring practices, our mentees' practice, and the performance of our mentees' students as we work to answer our inquiry question: *What key mentoring and induction strategies, alone or together, have the greatest impact on student achievement?* Drawing a causal line between mentoring, teacher practice and student achievement is complicated at best, but there are emerging patterns and trends to inform our work. Read about a Ravenswood teacher's success on page 14.

Continued on page 15

Success Story: Bringing a First Grade Class of English Language Learners to Grade Level Reading

Viviana Espinosa, a beginning first grade teacher in RCSD, started the 2008–09 school year with an aggressive goal: she wanted all her students at reading level by the end of year. Viviana knew this would be a challenge, especially when her class of twenty students included seventeen English language learners, two students with special needs, and nineteen who qualified for free or reduced lunch. None of the students began the year at grade level in reading.

Viviana and NTC mentor Bee Medders began working together in September 2008. During their weekly meetings, they used a number of tools and processes to gather data, including Selective Scripting, Analyzing Student Work and the Inquiry Action Plan from the NTC Formative Assessment System. They collaboratively analyzed multiple summative and formative assessment data points, benchmark

data, as well as their own observation notes in order to identify specific student learning needs.

As part of New Teacher Center's professional development series for Ravenswood teachers, Viviana attended a five-day program called Foundations in Literacy and Language presented by Bee and other NTC mentors. She also attended a yearlong professional development course called *Classroom Intervention*, co-taught by Reading Recovery Teacher Leaders from RCSD and New Teacher Center. Both courses focused on the Gradual Release of Responsibility theory, which supports students to gradually take on new learning, success and independence, and its application to practice, as well as other best literacy practices. The professional development provided Viviana with research-based theory and content that she was able to transfer into practice with the help

of Bee's expertise in literacy and mentoring. The combination of focused professional development and mentoring helped transform Viviana's instruction from incidental to intentional, from trial-and-error to strategic.

After looking at her students' assessment data, Viviana concluded that the majority of her students struggled with summarizing, both orally and in writing, and she developed well thought-out activities designed to improve their summary skills. During their mentoring sessions, Bee prompted Viviana to refine and target her instruction by asking:

- How will you use *Read Aloud* (in this case) to strategically address summary?
- What is your key teaching point?
- How will you incorporate your teaching point throughout the day?
- After you've given input, how will you

provide guided opportunities for practice and feedback before expecting mastery and independence?

- What will you look and listen for in the moment?

One-on-one mentoring, coupled with literacy-focused professional development accelerated Viviana's growth as a teacher and her students' learning. At the end of the year, fifteen of Viviana's students were reading at grade level. Of the remaining five, one made a year's growth, two made progress aligned with their special education goals, and two were referred to student study teams for more intensive intervention. In her first year of teaching, Viviana Espinosa provided her students with the skills and confidence for a lifetime of learning.

For the full story, see *eReflections* by visiting the New Teacher Center's website: www.newteachercenter.org

RCSD continued from page 13

Strategies and Impact: Retention

Building teacher leadership, creating a collaborative, professional culture, and deepening instructional expertise have had a positive impact on teacher retention. Teacher turnover, originally at 75% has stabilized to a little over 20%. While retaining every teacher is not the goal, we know that teaching is developmental, and we cannot ignore the importance of retaining and accelerating good teachers. From the exit interview data, it is clear that when teachers are not supported by effective leadership, or when new initiatives or policies are done to teachers, they will leave. Teachers who have

embraced a collaborative culture with high standards for themselves and others won't continue to accept substandard practices. They often stay in teaching but move to other placements.

Implications for a Teaching and Learning Organization

NTC's highest impact—developing mentor, teacher, and principal expertise, and providing collaborative opportunities to learn—require sustained efforts at all levels. Just as it is poor classroom practice to tell a student what to do and then expect mastery, it is equally ineffective to expect profound results by telling teachers what to do. A *quick fix* approach can be a trap for districts that feel the pressure of sanctions. The approach is not only ineffective, but also detrimental to building a culture of effective teaching and successful learning. ■

Holly Hopkins, Emily Lagozzino, and NTC mentor Barbara Allen discuss next steps for applying what they're learning to their classroom practice.



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The Role of the Principal in High-Quality Teacher Induction Programs

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Pre-service Continuum of Teacher Development

New Teacher Mentoring by Ellen Moir, Janet Gless, Dara Barlin, and Jan Miles

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Keys to the Secondary Classroom

by Rain Bongolan, Ellen Moir, and Wendy Baron
Published by Corwin Press

Policy and Practice Briefs

A Teacher Development Continuum: The Role of Policy in Creating a Supportive Pathway into the Profession


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The New Teacher Center is a national organization dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. NTC strengthens school communities through proven mentoring and professional development programs, online learning environments, policy advocacy, and research. Since 1998, the NTC has served over 49,000 teachers and 5,000 mentors, touching millions of students across America.

New Teacher Center

Launching the Next Generation



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